

Minutes

Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee Wednesday, 21st October, 2020

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Parker (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Lewis
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Mrs Pearson
Cllr J Cloke	Cllr Poppy
Cllr S Cloke	

Also Present

Cllr Aspinell
Cllr Mynott

Officers Present

Greg Campbell	-	Corporate Director (Environment & Communities)
Philip Drane	-	Director of Planning and Economy
Zoey Foakes	-	Governance & Member Support Officer
Amanda Julian	-	Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer
Tracey Lilley	-	Corporate Director (Housing & Community Safety)
Jonathan Stephenson	-	Chief Executive
Steve Summers	-	Strategic Director (Deputy Chief Executive)
Jacqueline Van Mellaerts	-	Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)
Richard Wilson	-	Commercial Consultant

556. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies received for this meeting.

557. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Resources and Economic Development meeting held on 9th September 2020 were approved as a true record.

558. Variation on the order of the agenda

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Parker SECONDED and Members agreed to take Item 5 (Covid 19 update) before Item 4 (Business and Recovery Plan) and to take Item 8 (Urgent business) before Item 7 (SAIL Business Plan).

559. Chairs Report

Members noted the updates provided in the Chair's report.

560. Covid-19 update

The report provided Members with an overview and update on the actions that had been delivered to assist with the Covid-19, (C19), pandemic and the boroughs response during this period.

The report had been deferred from the Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee on the 9th September 2020.

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to formally note and give thanks to the officers for the work undertaken over the past months and for the foreseeable future. This was echoed by the committee members.

The report was noted by committee members.

561. Business & Recovery plan

The Council's Corporate Strategic Plan 2020-25 was adopted in January 2020 and included the council's key objectives for 2020/21.

The report sought to members approval for the draft 2020/21 Business and Recovery Plan and also to update members on the progress of the Corporate Strategic Plan 2020/21 key objectives to date.

In addition, the report sought the committees endorsement of the framework and blueprint for the council's approach to recovery of both the council and the borough from the initial phase of the Covid-19, (C19), pandemic.

The report was deferred from the Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee on the 9th September 2020.

In discussion of the new smaller recycling bags, the Chair asked Mr Campbell to consider that information of these smaller bags were communicated to those properties including flats above retail units or properties don't have off street areas who would benefit. Ward members could assist to help create the list of these properties.

Members requested that a report go to a future appropriate committee in relation to recycling tonnage figures. This could also include the amount of recycling previously rejected – where the orange recycling bags had been collected, doesn't mean they were not contaminated and rejected.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED**.

Members are asked to:

R1. That the committee agrees the Business and Recovery Plan 2020/21 as attached at Appendix A.

R2. That the committee notes the progress of the Corporate Strategic 2020/21 key objectives as set out within this report.

R3. That the committee agrees the 2020/21 Business and Recovery Plan Performance Management Framework as attached at Appendix B.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council needs to monitor its performance of its agreed Key objectives. The Council needs to be ever more efficient, develop a modern thinking and delivering council.

562. The Future of Planning

The Government had recently announced several planning reforms, some confirmed and in place and other proposals for consultation. These included changes to the Use Classes Order (September 2020); reforms proposed in the Planning for the Future, White Paper (August 2020); and changes proposed to the current planning system (August 2020).

The paper gave an overview of the current changes and proposed reforms.

The recommended response on behalf of the Council to the Planning White Paper consultation is set out in Appendix A of the report. This included reference to concerns raised by the Local Government Association (LGA) regarding keeping planning local, and those made by the Wildlife Trusts regarding the need to address nature and climate issues.

Appendix B provides a one-page guide to the use classes order changes. Conclusions to the proposed consultation response included support for the need to reform and streamline planning, but that this should not be at the expense of local decision making and public involvement. Reforms should not be rushed and consideration should be given to the wider issues of housing delivery nationally rather than solely blame the planning system. Reforms presents an opportunity to make a real difference on issues such as climate change, health and wellbeing, the natural environment and active travel. Unfortunately, it was considered that the White Paper is too quiet on many of these matters or that further detail was required.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** an amendment to the recommendation to state:

R1. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Economy, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, to amend Appendix A according to comments raised by the committee and respond to the consultation.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

R1. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Economy, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, to amend Appendix A according to comments raised by the committee and respond to the consultation.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council is the local planning authority for the borough. It is responsible for planning decisions and planning for the future. The White Paper proposes reforms that will impact on those processes. Appendix A of the report sets out a proposed response to the consultation for Members to consider.

(Cllr Mynott declared a non pecuniary interest that he was a member of the Woodland Trust and Essex Wildlife Trust.)

563. Urgent Business

There was no items of urgent business to discuss.

564. SAIL Business Plan

The report presented the 2020/21 business plan for Seven Arches Investments Limited (SAIL) to Committee for approval.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Parker that the public be excluded from the meeting on the items of business (10 and 11) on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and was **RESOLVED**.

R1 That the 2020/21 business plan for Seven Arches Investments Limited is approved.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is a requirement of the Shareholder's Agreement that an annual business plan is presented to the Committee for approval.

The meeting concluded at 9:50pm.
